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QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 18 June 1998 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Today, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced a programme to strengthen Israel's illegal hold on Jerusalem. This programme includes the creation of an "umbrella municipality" with administrative powers over nearby towns in Israel, as well as over some Jewish settlements in the West Bank. It includes accelerated construction of roads for those settlements, a multi-year housing investment plan and new infrastructure. The plan would be funded under the 1999 budget and will be presented to the Israeli Government on Sunday. On this matter, Mr. Netanyahu specifically stated "We said we would work to strengthen, fortify and base our hold on Jerusalem". He also stated "I think this is a basic change in Jerusalem's status which will be remembered as a turning point". The Prime Minister also said that "the first thing we are doing is to link 'Greater Jerusalem' and the second thing is strengthening the Jewish majority in Jerusalem". Regarding the Israeli attempt to build a new illegal settlement at Jabal Abu Ghneim to the south of occupied East Jerusalem, he made the following statement: "Write it down. You will see houses at 'Har Homa', many houses, by the year 2000".

This programme and the outrageous statements by the Prime Minister not only gravely violate international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention, many Security Council resolutions and the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, they also indicate obvious contempt for the values that these instruments represent and for the will of the international community.

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The Prime Minister is also killing the Middle East peace process with such additional blatant violations of the existing agreements between the two sides.

It is obvious that signals sent recently by the Security Council in the form of presidential press statements on Israeli violations in Jerusalem and the other violations have not been sufficient to prevent such Israeli behaviour. We believe that the Security Council, as the body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, is under obligation to take specific concrete measures to prevent the above-mentioned programme and any other Israeli violations of international law and the Council's own resolutions.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36, 37 and 87, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. Nasser AL-KIDWA
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations